(b) the course of action Govern ment propose to take up in the coming financial year to enhance this percentage to prevent horticultural produce from going into waste;

(c) the number of fruit processing units established in the North-Eastern State, State-wise; and

(d) the number of those which are not in the running condition at present and the steps contemplated for making them run?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAI): (a) and (b) The utilization of fruits and vegetables for processing in the organized & unorganized sectors is estimated to be around 2% of the total production. With a view to encourage processing of horticulture produce, the Ministry of food Processing Industries provides financial assistance in the form of grant in aid for setting up of fruit and vegetable processing units. Government in 2004-05, under the Income Tax Act, has also allowed 100% deduction of profit for first five years and 25% deduction for another five years for new upcoming units. The Ministry does not set up processing units on its own.

(c) Horticulture processing units are both in the organized and unorganized sector. The data on number of units is not maintaned centrally by the Ministry.

(d) Data relating to fruit processing units not in running condition, is not maintained Centrally. The Ministry provided financial assistance under its Plan Schemes for upgradation/modernization of food processing units.

Disease surveillance

642. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether according to a report, an agreement was signed with United States to collaborate on surveillance of diseases;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the role of NGOs in such a scenario?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) Yes Sir, a

Joint Statement was signed between the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of the Republic of India and the Department of Health & Human Services of the United States of America on Expansion of India-US cooperation on Emerging and Re-emerging Infectious Diseases and Diseases Surveillance on 7 June, 2005.

(b) The collaboration focuses on collaborative applied research relating to emerging infectious diseases, strengthening disease surveillance, prevention and control and effective out break investigation and response. The Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC),USA and National Institute of Communicable Diseases, Dte. General of Health Services, and Indian Council of Medical Research in India are the collaborative parties. The NICD and ICMR involve other Indian Institution of excellence, including those belonging to State Governments and the Department of Biotechnology as essential partners, in the network for diseases surveillance.

(c) As a part of the Joint Statement both Governmental and non-Governmental Organizations in both the countries will be involved, as well as other regional and international organization partner, as appropriate, on collaborative applied research relating to emerging infectious diseases, strengthened disease surveillance, etc.

Regulatory Authority for Drugs

643. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering of setting up of an independent regulatory authority to make drug regulation more stringent to ensure quality and standards;

(b) if so, whether any move in this direction has been made by his Ministry;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) what are the measure that Government are now taking to enforce standards and ensure proper labeling of drugs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (c) A